SAKDALISTAS [7]

The biggest surprise of the 1934 elections was not the decisive defeat of Osmena and Roxas by Quezon, for that had been anticipated by unbiased observers, but was the showing made by the *Sakdalistas.* Before the elections, even the name *Sakdalista* was unknown to the public. Then the election results were published and everyone was astounded to learn that the *Sakdalistas* had elected two representatives to the Legislature, a provincial governor, and a number of municipal officials.

A year later came another unwelcome surprise. Labor Day, which in the Philippines coincides with May Day, annually causes apprehension due to the fear of excesses. In 1935, that apprehension would naturally be expected to be increased because of the near approach of the date for voting on the Constitution, against which there was opposition. Yet officialdom was only conspicuous by its absence. A carefully prepared Sakdal plot to seize the Government by force broke out in riots at three points. Municipal buildings were seized, property was destroyed, private citizens were molested, and constituted authority was defied. Before the Constabulary could put down the revolt, over a hundred *Sakdalistas* and a few Constabulary men had been wounded and killed.

The *Sakdalistas* were organized by Benigno Ramos in 1930-1931. They found a splendid breeding-place in the grievances, justifiable and unjustifiable, of the people. The land question, which the authorities had

sought to ignore, was originally at the bottom of the discontent. Just another

[7] **See interviews with Dean Conrado Benitez, delegate to the Constitutional Convention from La Lagunaj *Sakdalista* Representative Aurelio C. Almazan, and Benigno Ramos, undisputed leader of the *Sakdattstas,* which appeared in the Philippines *Free Press* on July zi, 19345 and the article, "From Farce to Tragedy, a History of the Rise and Fall of Sakdalism," written by Salvador P. Lopez, Jose A. Lansang, and Jesus Ma. Intengan, which appeared in the Philippines *Herald* on May n, 1935.**